Gallows Hill
Natural Area

Ownership: Town of Redding
Acreage: 72.9
Entrance: Off north side of Gallows Hill Road, 50 yards east of CL&P power line; or via Yovan Tract from Drummer Lane
Parking: Off road, at entrance (limited); best alternative, Drummer Lane
Trails: Fifth Connecticut, 0.65 mile, white
Drummer, 0.64, white
Ledge, 0.18, blue
Noose, 0.72, blue
Total all trails: 2.19

Background: Formerly known as the Falasca Tract, the Gallows Hill Natural Area was acquired by the Town of Redding in 1974. The trails system was designed in 1980 by Clifford Emanuelsen, director of Devil's Den Preserve in Weston. The woodland here is typical successional Yankee forest, and watercourses flow generally south to the Saugatuck River.

In the winter of 1779, troops under the command of General Israel Putnam were encamped in these woods. The "Fifth Connecticut" refers to a Colonial regiment comprised of men from Redding and Ridgefield (though the Fifth camped elsewhere). The "Noose" refers to the hanging nearby of a redcoat spy—thus, Gallows Hill.

Key Features: This particular natural area, combined with the Land Trust's Yovan Tract next door, provides a splendid setting for a two-hour stroll through diverse forest types. Along the central stretch of the Fifth Connecticut and the eastern section of the Drummer, one passes through dense stands of mountain laurel. Oak is predominant in the north as the Noose and the Fifth Connecticut ascend steeply to a height of land (one of the Whorteberry Hills) at elevation 640'. And directly north of the Drummer's junction with the Fifth Connecticut is a fine old stand of hemlock. At the second stream crossing (counting from the entrance) is a glade resplendent in season with ferns and marsh marigolds.